III. REMARKS

Claims 1 and 5-22 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 have been amended and claim 4 has been canceled. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Furthermore, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Netscan (http://web.archive.org/web/20021001103129/netscan.research.microsoft.com/Static/Default.asp), hereinafter "Netscan." Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection in light of the following remarks.

As a first matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the email correspondence between the Examiner and Applicant's representative, Meghan Q. Toner, regarding this application. In the interview, Applicants' representative discussed various features of the application, and the Examiner suggested amendments that would help further prosecution by overcoming the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102. Applicants have amended the claims in compliance with the Examiner's suggestions. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Office withdrawn the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 as indicated by the Examiner.

In correspondence with the Examiner, the Examiner indicated that Applicants should present the Office with arguments overcoming a potential 35 U.S.C. 103 rejection over the Netscan reference. In response to this request, Applicants state as follows:

Interpreting Netscan for purposes of this Response only, Applicants submit that Netscan discloses a simple system for ranking newsgroups. For example, Netscan's system can list newsgroups in ascending or descending order by the number of posts. If a user clicks on the metric for "number of posts," all of the newsgroups are simply re-ranked. To this extent, Netscan fails to provide a plurality of groups into which collaborative spaces may be categorized based on interactivity metrics.

In contrast, in the claimed invention, includes "...categorizing the collaborative space into one of a plurality of groups based on the nature and type of interactivity within the collaborative space..." As such, instead of simply listing all of the collaborative spaces in a modified order as in Netscan, the claimed invention categorizes the collaborative spaces into groups based on the interactivity metrics of the various collaborative spaces.

Netscan further does not disclose "...recommending the collaborative space from a group of collaborative spaces to a potential user based on desired interactivity metrics provided by the potential user..." As discussed above, Netscan simply provides a listing of newsgroups ranked by the number of posts. It does not categorize based on interactivity metrics, and it does not provide a recommendation to a user recommending a collaborative space from a group of collaborative spaces. In contrast, in the claimed invention, if a user is looking for a collaborative space that has a quick response time, the system will search its previously analyzed and stored interactivity metrics and recommend a website with a quick response time to the user. In another example, the user could be looking for a collaborative space where speed of response isn't crucial, but instead a user is looking for a high probability that a posting will receive a response. Again, the claimed system will search the interactivity metrics and recommend a collaborative space to the user.

In contrast, Netscan's system does not measure any of these interactivity metrics. There is no measuring of the nature and type of interactivity between users in the collaborative space. All that Netscan discloses is a listing of newsgroups based on the number of replies. Applicants have amended the claims to explicitly explain how the claimed system claims several more sophisticated elements than the Netscan system, including the plurality of groups, the categorization based on the nature and type of interactivity between users in a collaborative space, and the recommendation of a suitable collaborative space to a user from a group of collaborative spaces.

As such, Applicants submit that the Netscan system does not claim each and every element of the claimed system, and Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance.

IV. CONCLUSION

In addition to the above arguments, Applicants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. To this extent, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's interpretation of the claimed subject matter or the references used in rejecting the claimed subject matter. Additionally, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's combinations and modifications of the various references or the motives cited for such combinations and modifications. These features and the appropriateness of the Office's combinations and modifications have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicants reserve the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/Hunter E. Webb/
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